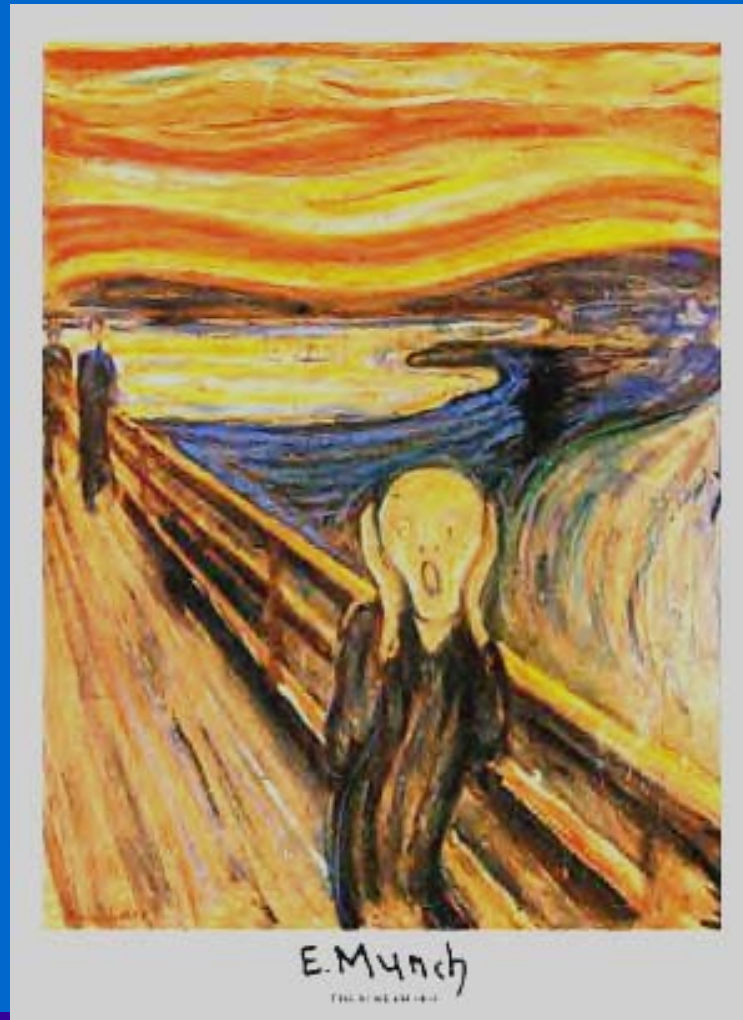


Stress and Job Satisfaction of Child Protective Services Workers



Stress and Job Satisfaction of Child Protective Services Workers

- The purpose of the study was to explore the stress and job satisfaction of Jefferson County child protective service workers, and explore the possible need for a program to deal with the stress of C.P.S. workers.



Literature Review

- According to Meyers (1996), other professions such as law enforcement, disaster relief and psychotherapy have acknowledged the effects of working with trauma victims, but the effects of working with child abuse victims on a regular basis has not received adequate attention.
- Meyers (1999) also states the results of her study suggest that making changes in any organization is not an easy task, the alternative of ignoring the effects CPS work has on it's employees can only result in further harm to both the workers and the children they are trying to protect.

Research Questions

- From a quantitative perspective the question was: What is the stress level and level of job satisfaction of child protective service workers in Jefferson County Social Services?
- From a qualitative perspective the question was: Is there a need for a stress management program to assist the child protective service workers of Jefferson County?

Research Methodology

- Design: One-shot case study
- Sampling: Non-probability availability sample of 36 child protective service workers
- Data Collection: Internal mail survey to workers with 2 standardized questionnaires on Stress and Job Satisfaction

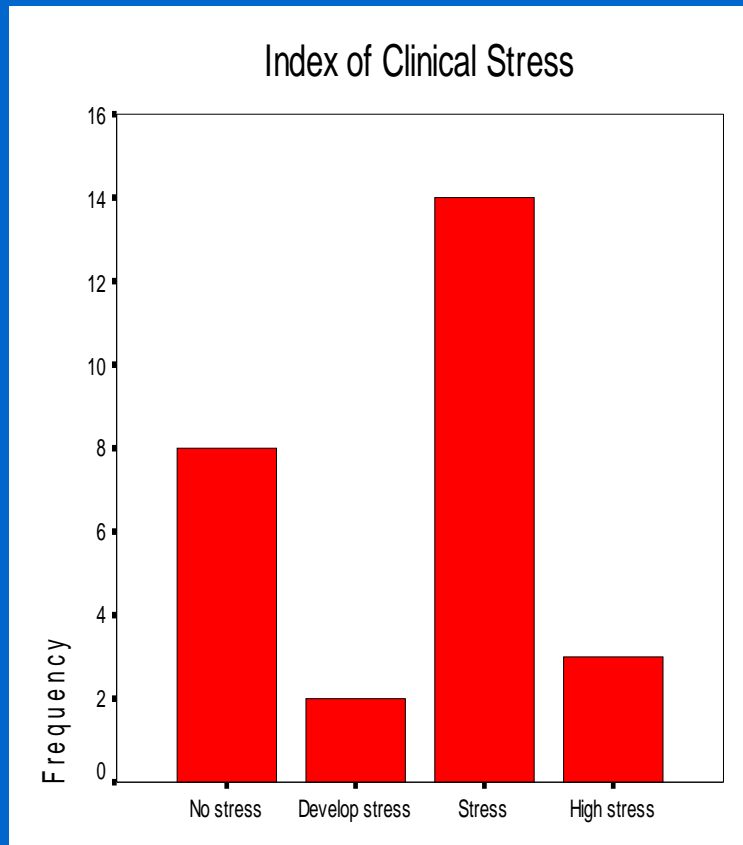
Description of Sample

N=29

- Gender: 22 female, 5 male.
- Race: 8 African American, 21 White.
- Educational level: 6 Graduate, 21 Bachelors
- Years at agency: Mean=5.52, Median=3.5
Mode=3.0, Minimum=.13, Maximum=25.
- Current caseload: Mean=15, Median=16,
Mode=17, Minimum=3, Maximum=27.

Results

Stress Levels of Workers

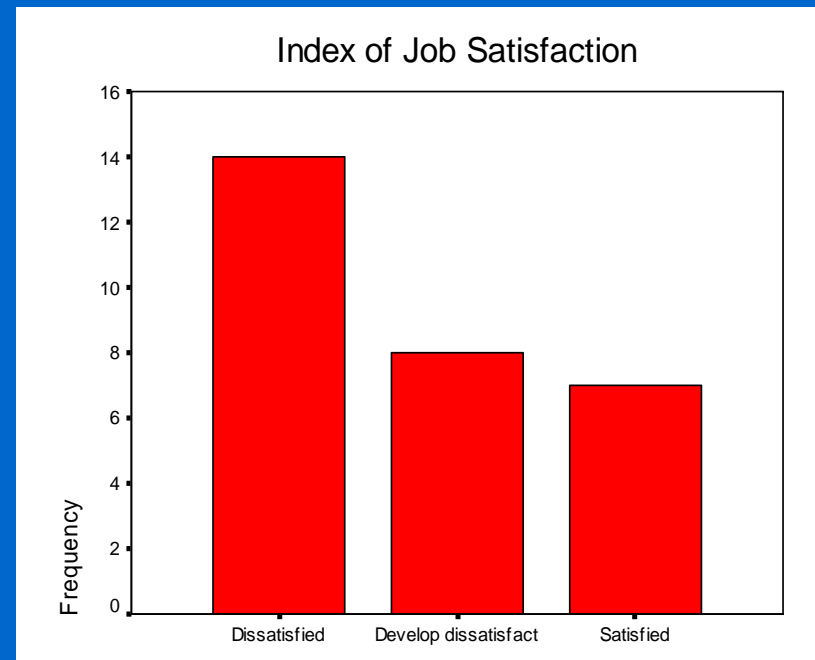


- Mean = 44.04 (SD=24.13)
- Median = 38.66
- Min = 8
- Max = 92.67
- Stress Categories (Hudson) =
 - 0-25=no stress = 8
 - 26-35=developing stress = 2
 - 36-70=stress = 14
 - 71-100=very high stress = 3

Results

Job Satisfaction of Workers

- Mean = 61.05 (SD = 12.96)
- Median = 62.57
- Min = 37.22
- Max = 86.11
- Job Satisfaction Categories (Hudson) =
 - 0-29 = very dissatisfied = 0
 - 30-59 = dissatisfied = 14
 - 60-69 = developing dissatisfaction = 8
 - 70-100 = satisfied = 7



Discussion

- Workers are highly stressed, with only 8 in a total of 29 that do not experience stress at all.
- Workers show low levels of job satisfaction, with only 7 that feel satisfied with their jobs.



Significant Correlations

Pearson Correlations and Kendall's Tau

Caseload has a significant impact on Clinical Stress

	Years at Agency	Caseload	Age
Index of Clinical Stress	.063 P = .64	.392 P = .05	.158 P = .25
Index of Job Satisfaction	.055 P = .68	-.330 P = .10	-.003 P = .98

Significant Correlations

Pearson R

- Clinical Stress and Job Satisfaction has a strong negative correlation of $-.685$ that is significant $p = 0.00$
- The higher the worker's stress the lower the job satisfaction of the workers

Discussion

- The workers at Child Protection are very stressed with low levels of job satisfaction.
- The high caseloads seem to have an important impact on the stress levels of the workers.
- The stress levels of the workers affect the work they do with families and decisions they make.

Qualitative Methodology

- Research question: Is there a need for a stress management program to assist the child protective service workers of Jefferson County?
- Design: Narrative
- Sampling: Availability sampling of 2 workers that responded to the request for answering open-ended questions
- Data Collection: Open ended questionnaire

Qualitative Responses

Do you believe the cabinet for families and children could benefit from providing a stress management program for employees in general?

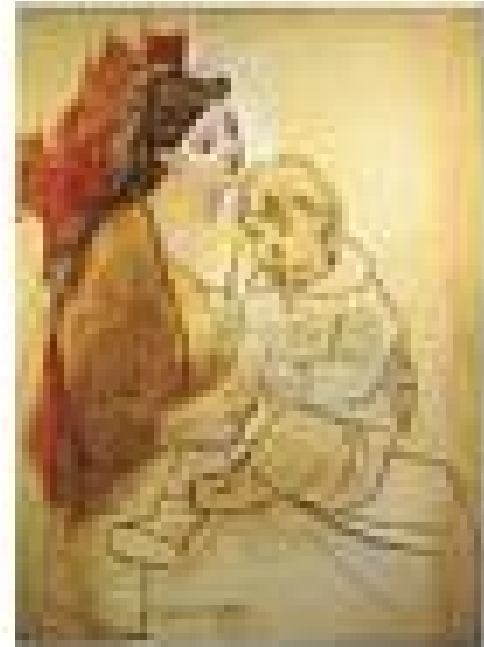
- Person 1:
- I think CFC could benefit from a stress management program.
- As long as there would be time for employees to utilize it.
- The nature of this job is very stressful, and employees do need
- an opportunity to decompress, yet they may not think they have
- time to use it.
- Person 2:
- Yes



Qualitative Responses

If a stress management program were initiated would you consider participating in such a program? If so, how often?

- Person 1
- 2) I would utilize a program such as this when I was very overwhelmed. Which for me is approximately once a month. However, I don't anticipate being here for an extended period of time, so by the time it gets implemented I may not be here.
- Person 2
- 2) Yes, as often as possible.



Qualitative Responses

Can you describe an experience of stress on the job or an overall feeling of stress related to the job? How often do you feel stressed on the job?

- Person 1
- 3) This job does not necessarily come with isolated stressful incidents, it is the overall work and demands of the Cabinet. For example, we are expected to conduct home visits with each child in their present home every month. Now when you have a caseload of approximately 22 cases, and some of those cases have three or more kids in multiple placements, this is virtually impossible. Since we are not allowed to have overtime for such purpose, either the visits occur on our own time or they do not occur at all. Generally the stress comes from the expectations of the Cabinet. I have had other jobs in social work, and although the situations were difficult, the expectations of the agency were more realistic.
- Person 2
- 3) All of the paperwork to be done, visits, etc, and not being able to get overtime to accomplish all those tasks. Too much work, not enough pay, and no overtime.

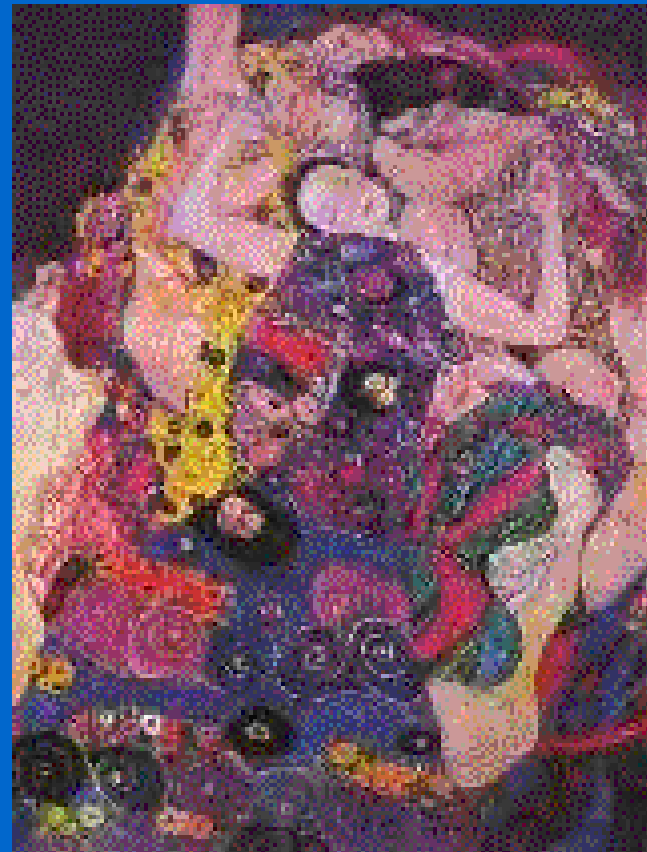
Qualitative Responses

Can you describe your satisfaction with the job related to a particular experience, or an overall feeling of job satisfaction?

- Person 1
- 4) Overall, I am satisfied with my job. Primarily because I think I do a good job, and I believe it is needed in society. Sometimes there is a feeling of satisfaction associated with particular case, especially when I receive compliments from family members.
- Person 2
- 4) My satisfaction comes from the children I help and seeing them in a safe environment.

Discussion of the Study

- This study although small in scale demonstrates a need for a stress management program for these workers.
- Child protective service workers are critical decision makers in many families.
- Workers must be taken care of if they are to continue to take care of families in Jefferson County. Assessing risk, and assessing needs of children and families is critical to many.



Recommendations and Future Research

- Strength- The quality of the scales used. The responses of the participants involved.
- Weakness- Small scale, the need for more quantitative and qualitative data.
- Future research- Implications of this one shot convenient sample results should be further explored with a larger sample of protective services workers.